Who Baptized the 3000?

BY JACOB W. BEER.

In Vol. 8, No.4, I see an estimate to prove 3000 baptisms possible by the twelve Apostles on the day of Pentecost. Such a possibility was far from necessary, and I do not believe the twelve did the baptizing. Perhaps they did no part of it, although it was done on that day. Prior to this time, Christ's followers were called Disciples, and Brethren. Matt. 28: 7. and 23: 8.

Of the Brethren there were over five hundred, saw Christ after his resurrection from the dead before his ascension, see 1 Cor. 15: 6, these were probably the results of John, 3: 22 and 4: 1, 2. Many of these, no doubt, were in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and Acts 1: 15, gives the number of Disciples as one hundred and twenty. Now Acts 2: 1, says they were all with one accord in one place. The Holy Ghost filled all the house, and sat on each of them.

The twelve did the preaching. Acts 2: 14. But the account does not say they (the twelve) baptized them, nor yet that they did not. When Christ preached they baptized. Now the word and doctrine were theirs as in Acts 6: 4. Paul keeps this order of things, 1 Cor. 1: 14–17; so did Peter, Acts 8: 48. Is it then not reasonable that the 120 disciples, with such as came in with the multitude, Acts 2: 5, 6, did the baptizing, while the twelve gave themselves entirely to the word and doctrine? Suppose that one sixth of the 120 Disciples were either women or otherwise disqualified for baptizing, enough remained to do the baptizing in about one half hour of time; 100 administrators baptizing each 30 persons would amount to 3000 souls.

I Am Trying To Believe.

It was during the last week of the meetings in the great Terminus Hall, St. Pancras, that I fell in with a very intelligent young lady on her way to the inquiry-room. She seemed to be quite anxious about her soul, and greatly troubled that she could not find peace. I asked her if she was a Christian. She replied, "*I am trying to be one*, sir." "But" said I, "you are not to try; you are just to believe."

"I know that quite well, sir; that is what Mr. Moody has been telling us in his sermon this afternoon. And that is what I am trying to do. *I am trying to believe.*"

"Well, my dear friend what are you trying to believe?"

Why, sir, I am trying to believe *that I am saved.*"

"But you are not to turn your faith upon yourself at all. You are nowhere bidden in the Word to believe that you are saved. Do you not see that if you were to find something in or about yourself that you recognized as salvation or the ground of it, you would not be trusting in Christ at all, but only in yourself. This is a very common mistake. It is indeed the old one of trying 'to feel' in order to be saved. We are constantly tempted to turn our thoughts inward upon ourselves, rather than outward to Christ, who alone can save. Now, dear friend, just give up all attempts to believe anything about yourself; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

With that kind of inconsitency that characteristic of a newly awakened mind she at once shifted her ground, and said, "Well, that is just what I am trying to do. I am trying to believe in Christ."

"Very well," said I, with the purpose of clarifying her thought to her own mind a little, "What are you trying to believe concerning him."

To this she made no answer for a long while. The truth is, she was full of confused thoughts; she really did not know what her trouble was, and stood more in need of some simple and clear instruction than anything else. So I determined upon a course of questions which I thought would lead her out of her darkness and confusion.

"Let us see" I proceeded, "If we can't get at your difficulty. You say that you are trying to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, but cannot. What is it you cannot believe? Perhaps if we can separate that which you do believe from that which you do not believe, we will be able to treat your difficulties more intelligently. Do you mind answering me candidly any questions touching your lack of ability to believe?"

"I will be pleased to answer any question I can, for I am very anxious to be saved."

"Well, then, we will try and see what you *do* believe, first. Do you believe that Jesus Christ came into the world, some two thousand years ago."

Oh, yes, I believe that, of course!"

"You are not in the least doubt upon that point?"

"Not the least, sir."

"Then you are 'not trying to believe' on that point?"

"No, sir."

"And do you believe that he was the Son of God?"

"Oh, yes, sir! I am not in doubt there in the least. I fully believe that he was God's Only-begotten Son, just as the Bible says."

"Very well. Now, do you believe that God sent him into the world to save sinners?"

"Of course! What else did he come for? If I did not believe that, I would not be here trying to get my own soul saved."

"Very good, that seems to be clear. Here are two or three points concerning Jesus that you do believe without a doubt; and so we rule *them* out from among the difficulties in the way of your faith. Do we both agree so far, that you are not 'trying to believe,' but that you really *do* believe?"

"Yes."

Then turning to Isaiah 53, I read the following: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chaitisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord made the iniquity of us all to meet on him." Now, my dear friend, do you believe that when God sent his Son into the world he did really lay or cause our sins and iniquities to be laid on him? Or to look at another Scripture (Rom. 4: 25) do you believe that 'he was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification."

After looking at these and other like passages for a while, she agreed that she was "bound to believe that Christ had borne the iniquity and sin of the world."

"Well, do you believe that he bore *your* sins as well as that of all other sinners? or do you expect him yet to come down and do this for you at some future time? Or when he died for sinners do you believe that you were left out of account?"

Here were some new lines for her. She dropped her head, and gave herself over to thought for a while, and then with the dawn of new light in her face she said in substance:

"I do not see how I am to separate one thing from another. If I believe that *he* came into the world and died for sinners, I *must* believe that he died for *me* as much as for anyone else, and that if God raised him for anybody's justification, he raised him for *mine* as well." But there was anxiety in her face still. She was not abandoning herself to the glad truth without reserve, so I went on:

Let us go over the ground of our inquiry a bit, and see where we stand. You began by saying that you were 'trying to believe on the Lord Jesus', but that you could not. Then when we began to take the difficulty apart, and look at it in bits you come to the conclusion that you *did* believe (1) That Jesus Christ came into the the world some two thousand years ago; that the story of his advent and death is no myth, but a real and blessed fact. (2) That Jesus is indeed the Son of God, and not a mere man. (3) That though we had all gone astray like lost sheep, yet God had laid on him the iniquities of us all. and had caused him to be delivered up for our offenses and had raised him again for our justification. (4) And finally you agree that *you* believe you are included in that blessed saving work! That *your* sins too, were on him, and that he was raised for your justification.

"Yes, I agree to all that."

"Now, let me ask two questions *First.*—If you believe these things, you are not *trying* to believe them; for you cannot at once be trying to believe and yet believing them. In that case you may give over trying, and begin trusting. Is not this fair and true?"

"Why, yes, sir, that seems very plain: but I had never thought of it in that light."

"Well. *Second.*—What is it about Christ that you cannot believe?"

She looked up in my face thoughtfully and steadily, as though she were trying to think of something she did not believe, and as if she feared to give up her trying and trust him whom she did believe. But as she mused and thought on who Christ was, and what he had done for her, her fears had to melt away. Another moment she threw them all to the winds, and with a radiant face she said:

"Oh now I see it. I am not to believe that *I* am saved, but that *Jesus Christ* saves me by what he has done for me, and by God raising him from the dead."

"Yes," I said: "Salvation is not the object of our faith, but Christ and his finished work. Indeed, salvation is the fruit or end of our faith. Further, we are not to look within for salvation, but to him who is our salvation. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH (Jesus) is my strength and my song; *He also is become my salvation.*' This is the grand secret. It is not what *we are*, what *we do*, what *we feel*, or what *we believe*; but it is JEHOVAH —Jesus who is our SALVATION."

May the Lord direct the eyes of all anxious souls who may be "trying to believe" away from themselves to Him who came, who was the Son of God, who was made sin for us, who was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification, AND WHO IS BECOME OUR SALVATION—*Rev. G. F. Pentecost, D.D, in The Christina (London).*

Timely Guidance.

A writer in *Friend's Review* relates the following circumstance: "Sometime about the year 1844, Elizabeth Redmond, an aged minister from New Jersey, attended the Baltimore Yearly Meeting, and after its close, while seated in the carriage which was to take her to the train, she remarked to her kind host that she did not feel easy to return home without making an effort to see a man whom she saw upon the platform of a station on her way to Baltimore. The late Hugh Balderston, a valued elder was sent for, and with only descriptions of the station and the individual, the stranger was found, ill in a room at one of the city hotels, and by his bedside the aged minister conveyed to the dying man the Lord's message to him which had been given her as the train sped by the station at which he was standing. He proved to be a member of one of the leading families in Maryland, and he gladly received the consolations of the Gospel thus sent to him in his hour of great need."—SELECTED.

The One Helper.

Wouldst thou have much power against sin, and much increase of holiness, let thine eye be much on Christ; set thine heart on him; let it dwell in him, and be still with him. When sin is likely to prevail in any kind, go to him, tell him of the insurrection of his enemies and thy inability to resist, and desire him to suppress and help thee against them, that they gain nothing by their stirrings but some new wound. If thy heart begin to be taken with and moved toward sin, lay it before him; the beams of his love shall eat out the fire of those sinful lusts. Wouldst thou have thy pride and passions and love of the world and self-love killed, go sue for the virtue of his death, and that will do it. Seek his Spirit, the spirit of meekness and humility and divine love. Look on him, and he will draw thy heart heavenward, and unite it to himself, and make it like himself. And is not that the thing thou desirest?

LEIGHTON.

Good breeding is a letter of credit all over the world.

He who depends on another dines ill and sups worse.